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## HOUSTON ARTS PARTNERS 2014 CONFERENCE

*The Global Classroom: Cultures and Communities*  
**SEPTEMBER 5 AND 6, 2014**

### Biographies

#### FEATURED SPEAKERS

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#### **Nick Rabkin, Keynote Speaker**

**Nick Rabkin** is an arts consultant, planner, and researcher based in Chicago who has more than two decades of experience as an advocate for the arts in public education. He is one of the co-founders of CAPE, the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, which has pioneered the development of rich arts-integrated curriculum and pedagogy across the curriculum. He has written widely on arts education—in schools and out. He was an editor of the foundational collection of reports about the impact of arts education, *Champions of Change* (1999), and the president of the Michigan Board of Education said his book, *Putting the Arts in the Picture: Reframing Education in the 21st Century* (2005), “shows that arts integration is a practical solution to including the arts in busy schools where pressure to improve academic performance is high.”

Nick is an Associate of the Center for Cultural Policy at the University of Chicago. His multi-year national study, *Teaching Artists and the Future of Education*, looked at the work and world of teaching artists in a dozen communities from coast to coast, and was published by NORC at the University of Chicago in 2011. His monograph on arts participation and declining rates of arts education in our schools was commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2010. Nick was a member of the consulting team that developed Chicago’s cultural plan in 2012, which included arts education as a top priority and has stimulated substantial new investment in the arts in Chicago Public Schools.

Nick was the deputy commissioner of cultural affairs in Chicago and the senior program officer for the arts and culture at the MacArthur Foundation, where arts education and the role of the arts in community development became significant priorities. He lives in Chicago with his wife, Cynthia Weiss, an artist and educator who taught him (nearly) everything he knows.

## James Haywood Rolling Jr.

A dual professor of Art Education and Teaching & Leadership, **Dr. James Haywood Rolling Jr.** serves as chair of Syracuse University's art education programs, which are based in both its College of Visual and Performing Arts and School of Education. In his earlier education, Rolling earned his MFA in studio arts research at Syracuse University while studying as a Graduate Fellow in the Department of African American Studies. Dr. Rolling completed his doctoral studies in Art Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, in 2003 under the mentorship of Dr. Graeme Sullivan and Dr. Judith Burton. While preparing teachers for K-12 New York State art teacher certification, Rolling is also actively instigating the reconceptualization of the art education discipline as a natural nexus of interdisciplinary scholarship where visual art, design, and other creative practices intersect as an avenue of social responsibility.

As a researcher, Dr. Rolling is devoted to telling the story of how human beings creatively constitute, shape, and reinterpret personal and collective identity. Dr. Rolling was an associate editor of the award-winning SAGE Publications *Encyclopedia of Identity*, and is currently a member of the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. His scholarly interests include: arts-based educational research, creative leadership, visual culture & identity politics, curriculum & pedagogy, social justice & community-engaged scholarship, and narrative inquiry in qualitative research.

Dr. Rolling is the author of the new book *Swarm Intelligence: What Nature Teaches Us About Shaping Creative Leadership*, a surprising look at the social origins of creativity, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2013. Drawing upon cutting-edge research in the realms of biological swarm theory, systems theory, and complexity theory, Rolling shows why adaptive social networking and the natural principles of self-organizing, collaborative competition make us both smarter and more creative than a conventional emphasis on the promotion and high-stakes testing of individual achievement.

Also in 2013, Dr. Rolling published the *Arts-based Research Primer*, a new introductory textbook released by Peter Lang Publishing that explores the flexible architecture of critical and creative practice-based theory-building methodologies in their potential to intersect with and augment traditional social science and educational research methods. Dr. Rolling is also the author of *Cinderella Story: A Scholarly Sketchbook About Race, Identity, Barack Obama, the Human Spirit, and Other Stuff That Matters* (AltaMira Press); *Come Look With Me: Discovering African American Art for Children* (Charlesbridge); in addition to 25 peer-reviewed articles and papers, nine book chapters, four encyclopedia entries, and four books on the subjects of the arts, education, creativity and human identity.

As a visual artist, Rolling focuses on mixed media explorations and portraiture of the human condition, viewing studio arts practices as an essential form of social research. Dr. Rolling has served on the Board of Directors of the National Art Education Association as Higher Education Division Director and has just been elected to serve as Commissioner-At-Large on the new National Art Education Association Research Commission. Dr. Rolling is the 2014 recipient of the National Higher Education Art Educator Award for outstanding service and achievement of national significance.

**Anthony Brandt**, Associate Professor of Composition and Theory,  
The Shepherd School of Music, Rice University



Composer **Anthony Brandt** earned his degrees from California Institute of the Arts and Harvard University. His honors include a Koussevitzky Commission from the Library of Congress and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet-the-Composer, the Houston Arts Alliance, the New England Foundation for the Arts and the Margaret Fairbank Jory Copying Assistance Program. He has been a fellow at the Wellesley Composers Conference, the Tanglewood Institute, the MacDowell Colony and the Djerassi Resident Artists Colony. He

has been a Visiting Composer at the Bowdoin International Festival, the Bremen Musikfest, Baltimore's New Chamber Arts Festival, Southwestern University, SUNY- Buffalo and Cleveland State University and Composer-in-Residence of Houston's OrchestraX and the International Festival of Music in Morelia, Mexico. A recording of his vocal music, including his chamber opera *The Birth of Something* with a libretto by playwright Will Eno, has been released by Albany Records (Troy 1144). His recent works include *Maternity* for soprano and chamber orchestra, with a libretto by neuroscientist and author David Eagleman, *Sphinx*, a drama with music in collaboration with Blackburn Prize winner Jennifer Haley, *Four Score* for the prize-winning SOLI ensemble and *What Time Is It?*, an innovative music-and-art installation created in Houston's Market Square created with artist Jo Fleischhauer and composer Chapman Welch. He is currently writing a chamber opera, *Ulysses, Home*, with a libretto by playwright Neena Beber.

Dr. Brandt is co-founder and Artistic Director of the Houston-based contemporary music ensemble Musiqa. Winner of a 2013 Chamber Music America/ASCAP Adventurous Programming Award, Musiqa presents an annual Downtown series along with free loft concerts at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. Musiqa also has one of the largest outreach programs of any contemporary music ensemble in the United States: the ensemble has performed for over 35,000 public school students, all at no cost to schools, and won six consecutive awards from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Dr. Brandt has organized two international conferences on "Exploring the Mind through Music," most recently in June 2011. He has co-authored a paper on music and early language acquisition published in the journal *Frontiers in Auditory Cognitive Neuroscience*. He is currently pursuing several research projects in music and cognition and serves on the Advisory Board for Methodist Hospital's Center for Performing Arts Medicine. Dr. Brandt is also the author of an innovative, free web-based music appreciation course called "Sound Reasoning," created for Rice University's Connexions Project. "Sound Reasoning" was awarded an Access to Artistic Excellence Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Dr. Brandt is an Associate Professor of Composition at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He was awarded the University's George R. Brown Award for Superior Teaching in 2007 and the Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Prize in 2001.

## **David Eagleman**, Neuroscientist and Author



**David Eagleman** is a neuroscientist and a *New York Times* bestselling author. He directs the Laboratory for Perception and Action at the Baylor College of Medicine, where he also directs the Initiative on Neuroscience and Law. He is best known for his work on time perception, synesthesia, and neurolaw. At night he writes. His work of fiction, *SUM*, is an international bestseller published in 27 languages. *Why the Net Matters* examines what the advent of the internet means on the timescale of civilizations. *Wednesday is Indigo Blue* explores the neurological condition of synesthesia, in which the senses are blended. His most recent book, the *New York Times* bestseller *Incognito: The Secret Lives of the Brain*, explores the neuroscience "under the hood" of the conscious mind—in other words, all the aspects of neural function to which we have no awareness or access.

Eagleman is a Guggenheim Fellow, a winner of the McGovern Award for Excellence in Biomedical Communication, a Next Generation Texas Fellow, Vice-Chair on the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Neuroscience & Behaviour, a research fellow in the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, Chief Scientific Advisor for the Mind Science Foundation, and a board member of The Long Now Foundation. He is an academic editor for several scientific journals. He was named Science Educator of the Year by the Society for Neuroscience, and was featured as one of the year's Brightest Idea Guys by Italy's *Style* magazine. He is founder of the company *BrainCheck*, the scientific advisor for the television drama *Perception*, and has been profiled on the Colbert Report, NOVA Science Now, the New Yorker, CNN's Next List, and many other venues. He appears regularly on radio and television to discuss literature and science.

## **Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble**

Dr. Karl Schaffer, Professor of Mathematics, De Anza College

Mr. Erik Stern, Professor of Dance, Weber State University

**Dr. Karl Schaffer** has co-directed the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble for the past 20 years. He and co-director Erik Stern have toured throughout North America performing at such venues as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia, and the Mondavi Center in Davis, and most recently in New York and Hawaii. In 2005 they were named to the artist roster of the Kennedy Center's Partners in Education, which sponsors arts workshops at many of the largest performing arts centers in the United States. Schaffer and Stern have received five National Endowment for the Arts Access to the Arts awards for their cross-disciplinary performance work linking dance and mathematics. The latest grant will fund an extended choreographic residency by Schaffer and Stern in Puerto Rico in 2009.

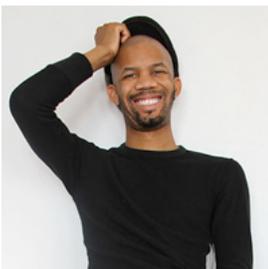
Schaffer also directs several Santa Cruz-based touring shows about dance and mathematics; the group has recently performed in Santa Barbara, Monterey, and Marin, and is part of the Spectra Arts in the Schools program. Schaffer was an artist-in-residence at the Mello Center for the Performing Arts in Watsonville for 2004-2005. He has been keynote presenter on integrating dance and mathematics at numerous conferences on the arts, mathematics, and math education throughout North America. He teaches mathematics at De Anza College, and teaches dance as an independent artist.

**Mr. Erik Stern** holds a B.A. in Biology from UC Santa Cruz and an M.F.A. in Dance from CalArts. His professional work as a musician, composer and actor is interwoven in his dances, and has led to collaborations with educational organizations, mathematicians, choirs, civic organizations, school systems, and dozens of artists. Erik toured with Tandy Beal and Company over a period of ten years and has performed with Patri Nader's Ballet de España. Professor of Dance at Weber State University, Stern was 'Endowed Artist' for the College of Arts and Humanities from 1999-2002. In 2002, his duet, Table of Content, was selected and performed at the Kennedy Center as part of the National American College Dance Festival. In 1985 Stern and Karl Schaffer created the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble. The ensemble has created eleven evening-length concerts, received over thirty grants, including five from the National Endowment for the Arts and toured throughout North America. On the roster of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Partners In Education program, they tour nationally to share their expertise on how to bring dance into the classrooms and connect it with mathematics curriculum. In 2003, he produced *Muscle Memories* as part of RDT's LINK Series, and in 2006 Stern staged, directed and performed in Navigating Lake Bonneville, an original work by Utah Poet Laureate Ken Brewer and composer/guitarist Brad Richter. During summer 2006, Stern was at Appelboom, a resident artists' program in rural France, during which he finalized aspects of Demolition Derby and worked on other projects with Brad Richter.

**Saki** (she uses first name only) has worked as a dancer and math/dance workshop teacher with the Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble since 1999. She has also performed with The New Pickle Circus, Tandy Beal & Company, Bandaloop, and SoVoSo. She has performed and taught in dozens of Bay Area and Santa Cruz schools and at Santa Cruz Sports Central, The Mello Center, and Mount Madonna Middle and High School. She has a Bachelor of Fine Art in Modern Dance from the University of Utah. She currently is faculty at West End Studio Theatre, in Santa Cruz, teaching a range of styles including Creative Movement, Choreography and Improvisation, Circus Arts and Skills, Hip Hop, Modern Dance, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Acrobatics and Performance Skills.

## PANELISTS AND MODERATORS

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**Emanuelee "Outspoken Bean"** is a performance poet, compassionate mentor and dedicated educator. Bean travels the country performing his original works and inspiring young creative minds, from Trinidad to Off-Broadway New York City and back to Houston, where he inspires others to find their voice. He is a Texas Poet Laureate nominee, ranked 9th in the Individual World Poetry Slam 2013, ranked 2nd in collaborative poetry at Group Piece Finals 2013, and is ranked 11th at National Poetry Slam 2014 (both with Houston VIP). He started performing spoken word in 2005. In his senior year at Prairie View A&M, Bean founded and coached the University's first poetry slam team. In their first year, they won the title in their region and grabbed the 8th place ranking in the country at College Union Poetry Slam Invitational (CUPSI

'08). Bean has also worked with the Harris County Department of Education, Houston's Young Audiences: Arts for Learning and Texas Commission for the Arts, and Houston Grand Opera. He serves as the Project Coordinator, Lead Coach, and mentor for Meta-Four Houston, a project under Writers in the Schools' WITS Performance program, where professional performance/slam poets encourage self-expression and literacy among Houston's youth through creative writing and performance.



**Ana Calvo** attended the University of Houston – Downtown where she became president of the disabled student organization. As president of the organization, Ana discovered her love for advocating the rights of the disabled. Ana received her Bachelors in Arts of Social Science with concentrations in Psychology and Sociology and a Minor in Political Science in 2002. Upon her graduation, Ana was featured in *Texas Magazine* for her accomplishments. Ana went on to get her Master in Social Work from the University of Houston College of Social Work in 2007. In addition to the article in the *Houston Chronicle* in 2002, Ana was on Patricia Gras' PBS show, and Marcelo Marini featured a story on Telemundo about Ana's accomplishments. She was recently featured in *HTexas Magazine* and has done numerous television appearances locally. Ana

currently works in Houston Community College's Vocational Advancement and Social Skill Training (V.A.S.T.) Department as director of transition services, where she prepares young adults with cognitive and physical disabilities to lead healthy and productive independent lives. Before joining HCC VAST, Ana worked at the Shriners Hospital for Children – Galveston/Houston as the transition coordinator for seven years. Ana is very active in the community and currently serves as Chair for the City of Houston's Commission for People with Disability. In May 2008, Ana was awarded the Dorothy Caram Commitment to Leadership Award from the United Way Foundation. At the Ms. Wheelchair America pageant in August, Ana was awarded the Nicki Ard Award for her advocacy accomplishments. Recently Ana was recognized as one of the 100 Houston Latina Women in Leadership. As Ms. Wheelchair Texas 2009, Ana promoted her platform of helping the youth to embrace their disabilities and achieve their dreams through education, employment, and community involvement and will continue to be an advocate for people with disabilities.



**Juan (Tony) Castilleja Jr.** is a Systems Engineer in the Commercial Crew Program supporting the Boeing CST-100 Commercial Spacecraft development, which is designed to provide transportation to the International Space Station. He provides technical design and program integration, leads upgrades for the full scale CST-100 mock-up, and supports multiple technical and business functions. Previously, Castilleja was a stress engineer on the P8A Navy Program and in the Space Shuttle Program for 16 missions as a Propulsion Engineer from 2009-2011. Castilleja joined Boeing as an intern in 2006 through INROADS, an organization whose mission is to develop and place talented minority youth in business and industry and prepare them for corporate and community leadership.

Castilleja's technical achievements are complemented by recognition for his efforts to inspire the next generation of engineers. In 2011, he was selected as a White House Fellows Regional Finalist and received the Boeing Exceptional Volunteer Service (BEVS) Award for his mentorship work in the DREAM: STEM outreach program he co-founded at Rice University promoting engineering careers to high school students. In 2012, he received the "Most Promising Engineer Award" from the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), a national award recognizing significant technical accomplishments, outreach and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) advocacy.

Tony has also served on the Boeing STEM Education Strategy Team, has held leadership positions on the Boeing Hispanic Employees Network Houston Board, and REACH Houston, and participates on the enterprise SHPE and Great Minds in STEM (GMIS) External Affiliation committees.

Castilleja completed a Master's and Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, both from Rice University in Houston, Texas. He has served as a panelist at the US Department of Education for STEM Best Practices for English Language Learners, was selected in the inaugural Emerging Leaders Class of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, received the 2009 Houston Mayor's Volunteer Award and *Hispanic Engineer & IT Magazine* '40 under 40 Engineers' in STEM, is a board member of the Houston Hispanic Forum, and was selected into the 2013 Class of the BN&SS Emerging Leaders Development Program.



**Dr. Billy Cohn** is a cardiovascular surgeon and the Director of Minimally Invasive Surgical Technology at the Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital in Houston, Texas. He is the co-director of the Cullen Cardiovascular Research Laboratory and an Associate Professor of Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering at The University of Houston.

Dr. Cohn received his undergraduate degree from Oberlin College, and received his medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine, where he remained for general surgical and cardiothoracic surgical residency training and where he served as the last chief resident under the legendary Michael DeBakey. After graduation, he took a teaching position at Harvard Medical School where he rose to the rank of Associate Professor of Surgery and served as an attending cardiothoracic surgeon and Director of Minimally Invasive Surgery at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center for eleven years.

Now at the Texas Heart Institute, Dr. Cohn has a busy surgical practice and is part of the surgical heart failure team which specializes in implantation of mechanical pumps to support the failing heart and heart transplantation. With a passion for medical device development, Dr. Cohn has more than 40 U.S. patents awarded or pending for his medical innovations and has been honored as the Distinguished Inventor of the Year by the Intellectual Property Owners Association. When he is not operating or inventing new medical devices, he can be found playing at local Houston bars with blues legend Little Joe Washington, or practicing close-up magic.



**Mark Cueva** serves as Education Liaison for Mayor Annise Parker and directs the Office of Education Initiatives in the City of Houston’s Department of Neighborhoods. He is a native Houstonian, attended Houston’s University of St. Thomas, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. His work experience includes radio and television media, non-profit, and public sector.

Cueva develops partnerships between the Department of Neighborhoods and community organizations to increase mentoring and career-focused learning opportunities for students while developing new ways to connect students to available resources. Cueva also develops social media strategy for Department of Neighborhoods as well as civic technology initiatives related to mapping, data, and technology. He is passionate about finding ways that technology can make it easier to access information and services to help stabilize families and communities in Houston.



**Juan Zane Crawford** serves as the Communication Chair of the Houston Symphony’s African American Leadership Council. Juan is a dedicated family man as a loving husband and father to two sons. He’s a devout man of God who believes in treating others with kindness, understanding and forgiveness. He’s a patriot who joined the Air Force after high school and worked his way up to the rank of Captain. With natural leadership skills, an analytical mind and the ability to communicate with others up and down the chain of command, Juan achieved a great deal while serving as an officer—all the while taking great pride in knowing he was serving his country. During his two decades of service, he also pursued his own education and earned his bachelor’s and MBA degrees.

Drawing from his Air Force background and his MBA education, Juan has found real estate to be the perfect fit since he started in 2005. He’s found Houston to be a great place to enjoy life with his wife, Lisa, and their two boys, Kael and Korbin. In order to provide his clients with the highest level of service possible, Juan started his own real estate company—Leak Properties (his son Kael’s name spelled backwards).



**Rachel Hemphill Dickson** is a native of the Midwest and has been in Houston for 16 years. She received her Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering from the University of Missouri – Columbia; and while she still loves mathematics, she quickly learned that she prefers performance as part of her life journey. She secured a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign. She worked as an artist in Chicago for 2 years where she was a company member of and outreach coordinator for Footsteps Theatre Company, a

substitute teacher in Chicago Independent School District, two-time coordinator of the city-wide artist conference sponsored by Mass Photo, and a volunteer for a local meal service church food pantry and for the Boys and Girls Club. Her inspiration for Houston's Driven Theater Company began with her ensemble work with Imagination Theater, a company based in Chicago. Upon relocating to Houston, she continued to do on-camera, voice-over, theatre and outreach work.

Rachel has taught as a substitute teacher in Houston, Klein, and Aldine Independent School Districts. She has taught various theater topics at local churches, Main Street Theater, High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Actor's Theatre of Houston, and the Ensemble Theatre. Following a short tenure at Prairie View A & M University in the Music and Theater Department where she served as the advisor to the Charles Gilpin Players, she currently teaches as a Lecturer at University of Houston – Downtown. Her time teaching crossed kindergarten through twelfth grade, English to Spanish speakers, privileged to underprivileged, and academically advanced to special education, and inspired her to secure a Master of Social Work degree. She continued the process to receive her licensure credentials with the intent to develop and create issue-based theatre by, for and about youth. That dream expanded and came to fruition with the advent of Driven Theater Company. While Rachel has also served as a Costume Designer, Stage Manager, Props Mistress, Touring Coordinator, Producer, Artistic Consultant, and research Dramaturge on numerous productions, she is currently the Artistic Director of Driven Theater Company, which focuses on issue-based works.



**St. John Flynn** is the Arts and Culture Director at Houston Public Media. Born and raised in Coventry, England, St. John received his B.A. (with honors) in French from the University of Liverpool. He lived and worked in France for two years before coming to the U.S. in 1986 to attend graduate school at the University of Georgia (UGA) in Athens. He worked as a teaching assistant while pursuing his master's degree in French and taught introductory level French classes. After completing his M.A. he was accepted into the Ph.D. program in comparative literature at UGA where he taught world literature survey classes.

St. John started in public radio in 1993 at WUGA-FM, the Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) affiliate on the UGA campus, as a part-time weekend classical announcer. In the spring of 1995, he took over as host of *Night Music*, WUGA's weeknight classical program that aired across the 15-station GPB network. In the fall of 1995 he was offered a part-time job as a classical announcer at GPB headquarters in Atlanta and moved away from Athens leaving behind an unfinished Ph.D. dissertation.

He was hired full-time at GPB as a cultural affairs producer in 1997; he continued to host classical music on the network but also began to produce arts pieces for GPB's weekly news magazine. He also developed *Cover to Cover*, a monthly call-in book show focusing on Georgia authors. He was the GPB network host for NPR's *All Things Considered* for a number of years before moving to *Morning Edition* which he hosted for eight years. In 2001 he was promoted to Radio Program Manager, supervising all GPB network programming, and in 2005 he was asked to become Radio Manager, reporting to the Executive Director, with responsibility for GPB radio operations around the state.

Welcoming the chance to work at a major market station, St. John joined KUHF as Program Director for KUHF-Classical, and host and executive producer of *The Front Row*, in March 2008. In May 2011, KUHF purchased a second FM signal and he became the founding Program Director for Classical 91.7FM/KUHA.

With the creation of Houston Public Media from the merging of HoustonPBS/Ch. 8, KUHF and Classical 91.7, in early 2014 St. John moved into the position of Arts & Culture Director within the newly-created Arts & Culture unit responsible for creating content across all Houston Public Media platforms.



**Dr. Reagan Flowers** has been implementing integrated STEM best practices in classrooms internationally for the last 12 years. She began her career in education as a science teacher at Jack Yates High School, and has since remained dedicated to her calling as a leader in academia. During her tenure at Jack Yates High School, Dr. Flowers enrolled a group of students in an annual national robotics competition. The team outperformed everyone's expectations including their own. This experience motivated Dr. Flowers to focus on closing academic achievement gaps by integrating the discipline of STEM education with classroom learning.

In 2002, Dr. Reagan Flowers used her personal resources and founded C-STEM (Communication-Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics) Teacher & Student Support Services, Inc. She relied on her best and worst experiences as a classroom science teacher, guidance counselor, dean of students, and school improvement facilitator to help her build a solid platform. C-STEM became the first integrated Pre-K through 12th grade STEM enrichment program in the nation. Over the years, the organization has impacted more than 100,000 children and its revenue has grown from \$5,000 to over \$5 million.

Dr. Flowers' passion for STEM education combined with her social entrepreneurial spirit, expertise in partnership development, curriculum and program design, and project management have made her the natural choice to lead in the realm of STEM education. Her work has created a model for successful engagement of students and teachers in STEM, using relevant learning experiences that are transformative and real-world and are 21st Century best practices.

Dr. Flowers has authored two books, *CSTEM Pedagogy: Your Guide to Project-Based Learning* and *The CSTEM Challenge: A Feeder Pattern Approach to Reaching All Students through Hands-on Project-based Learning*. She serves on the national board of the American Leadership Forum. Dr. Flowers has also received numerous recognitions including being named as 100 Women Leaders in STEM, featured in U.S. World News Report for her WISE award nomination, and most recently she was honored by The White House as a STEM Access Champion of Change. Dr. Flowers continues to produce articles and blogs and links her success to three things: education... compassion... and an "iron will"... to make a difference.



**Robert Floyd** currently serves as Executive Director of the Texas Music Educators Association and resides in Austin, Texas with his wife and two children. Prior to moving to Austin in June of 1993, Floyd taught instrumental music in the Richardson Independent School District for 25 years.

Floyd has received the Ross Perot Award for Teaching Excellence in Richardson ISD. He has served as the high school representative on the National Band Association Board on two different occasions and in 1986 was one of eight band directors in the United States elected to membership in the American Bandmasters Association. In 1992 Floyd was one of ten band directors in the United States named to the Legion of Honor by the Sousa Foundation. In 1997 he was elected to the Board of Directors of the Texas Society of Association Executives. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Wind Symphony and served as resident conductor of that organization prior to his move to Austin. Floyd serves as Chair of the Texas

Coalition for Quality Arts Education and recently was awarded the A. A. Harding Award by the American School Band Directors Association for outstanding contributions to the band movement in the United States.

In Floyd's position as Executive Director of TMEA he is responsible for management of the association, production of the annual clinic/convention which has over 26,000 people in attendance, editing the monthly journal, *The Southwestern Musician*, and working with the Legislature and State Board of Education to promote and preserve fine arts in the public schools of Texas.



**Jeff Fuller** is Director of Student Recruitment, University of Houston, and Director, National Association of College Admission Counseling Board of Directors. Jeff Fuller has served as Director of Student Recruitment at the University of Houston since February 2007. Jeff began his work at the University of Houston in 1995 as an Admission Counselor then moved into the positions of Coordinator for Freshman Admissions, Assistant Director and then Associate Director. Jeff is responsible for all aspects of undergraduate recruitment, territory management, admission counseling, and application review and institutional reporting. He leads a team of 25 dynamic individuals consisting of freshman, transfer and international admission counselors. Originally from Corpus Christi, Texas, Jeff received two bachelor's degrees from the University of Houston along with a master's degree in Higher Education Administration.

Jeff has held numerous leadership positions in the National and Texas Associations for College Admission Counseling. Jeff currently serves on the National Association for College Admission Counseling Board of Directors. He is a past president of TACAC, past TACAC Treasurer and former College Information Hotline.

Jeff also served as a NACAC Assembly Delegate representing Texas ACAC. Jeff served two years as Chair of NACAC's Fiscal Oversight Committee. Additionally, Jeff received the first ever Rising Star Award from both TACAC and NACAC. This award recognizes young promising individuals in the profession. He is a frequent contributor to the NACAC Imagine Fund. Jeff serves his community in various ways. He has previously served as Chair of the Houston Area Operation School Supplies Committee, a project aimed at raising money for school supplies for deserving students. For his commitment, Jeff was recognized as an Outstanding Volunteer by the University of Houston Alumni Organization. Jeff also serves as an allocations team volunteer with the United Way Texas Gulf Coast. Jeff is also a lifetime committeeman on two Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo committees.



**Gary Gibbs** has served as the Executive Director of the Texas Commission on the Arts since 2007. Prior to joining the TCA, Gibbs served as Director of Education and Outreach at Houston Grand Opera for sixteen years. During his tenure, the education and audience development programs he administered achieved national recognition. He currently serves on the board of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the Mid-America Arts Alliance. He has served on numerous local and national panels, including the National Endowment for the Arts.



**Dr. Brent Hasty** is Executive Director of MINDPOP, an organization that coordinates citywide efforts to expand creative learning in and out of school time. The successful partnership among MINDPOP, Austin ISD, the City of Austin and over 40 arts and cultural institutions has impacted the teaching and learning of Austin students in innumerable ways, including improved student achievement and increased engagement. Prior to assuming his position at MINDPOP, Dr. Hasty served as a Clinical Assistant Professor at The University of Texas at Austin teaching Elementary Social Studies Methods in the College of Education. A former teacher and an award-winning arts administrator, Dr. Hasty is a long time consultant (15+ plus years) with Big Thought. His past projects at Big Thought include the Big Thought Institute, the Dallas Arts

Learning Initiative Curriculum Alignment and Dallas ArtsPartners, a program for which he was a principal architect. His research on arts integration, service learning, and Holocaust education has been presented internationally and published in peer-reviewed journals.



Meteorologist **Travis Herzog** joined KTRK-TV in July of 2006. Previously, he worked as the morning meteorologist just up the road in Bryan, Texas at KBTX-TV, where the Texas Associated Press twice recognized him as one of the top broadcast meteorologists in the state.

From hurricanes and tornadoes to ice storms and floods, Travis has covered just about every kind of weather element experienced in southeast Texas. He aims to present the public with weather forecasts that are informative, educational, and fun. When severe weather strikes, you can trust Travis to provide you with timely weather updates and potentially life-saving information. You can watch his live weather broadcasts Monday through Friday on Eyewitness News at 11am and Eyewitness News at 4pm.

Travis is no stranger to Texas weather because he's lived here all his life. In fact, he received his calling to be a meteorologist when Hurricane Gilbert spawned a tornado that passed by his childhood home in San Antonio, Texas. In the aftermath, he developed a deep passion and profound respect for the atmosphere by reading every weather book he could find, prompting his classmates to label him "the weatherman," which he preferred over "school boy."

Raised to be a Longhorn, Travis eventually received the blessing of his parents to pursue his love for weather at Texas A&M University. In Aggieland he met his wonderful wife and he determined that he wanted to be a broadcast meteorologist. Choosing a career that paid him to forecast and talk about the weather seemed to be a no-brainer, even if it meant enduring corny weatherman jokes for the rest of his life.

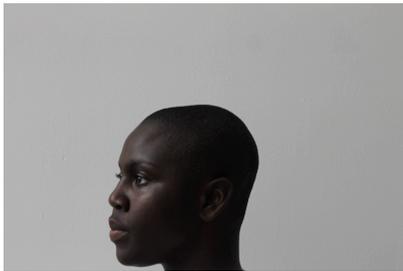
Travis graduated with a B.S. in Meteorology and a perfect 4.0 GPR. He earned numerous awards and honors along the way, most notably the prestigious Brown-Rudder Outstanding Student Award, given to an individual that embodies the

character, morals, and integrity of former Texas A&M University President Earl Rudder. He is a member of the American Meteorological Society, the National Weather Association, Phi Beta Kappa, and Phi Kappa Phi.

Travis enjoys being married, rough-housing with his two boys, joyfully serving at his local church, playing racquetball, and tracking cold fronts.



**Laura Isensee** covers education for KUHF, including K-12 and higher education. Previously, she was a staff reporter at *The Miami Herald* and regularly contributed to WLRN, the local NPR affiliate and Miami Herald news partner. In 2012, Laura won first place in politics reporting from the Society of Professional Journalists' Green Eyeshade Awards for her work with Miami Herald reporter Jay Weaver on shadow-banking in Miami politics. Laura grew up in Houston and got her start in journalism in the city, when she reported for a Spanish-language paper and the *Houston Chronicle*. Her work has also appeared in *The Dallas Morning News*, *Reuters* and *Clarín*, one of Argentina's major newspapers. Laura studied Spanish and liberal arts at the University of Texas at Austin and earned her masters from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. Her radio stories have aired on national programs, such as NPR's *All Things Considered* and *Here & Now*.



**Autumn Knight** is a Houston-based performance/video/installation artist, professor at Prairie View A&M University, and a trained drama therapist. She is a co-founder of Jelly Jar, a performance art duo with Dr. Denise Frazier. Play, social encounter, and spontaneity re-emerge as themes in her performance and installation art work. Autumn Knight holds an M.A. in Drama Therapy, from New York University (New York, NY) and a B.A. in Theatre Arts/Speech Communications from Dillard University (New Orleans, LA). She holds certificates in Arts Management & Marketing (Birkbeck College, London, UK) and in Speech & Drama (Central School of London, London, UK). Ms. Knight has a long track record of working with

education and social services organizations including serving as: Group Relations Consultant, New York University; Conference Administrator, Teacher's College, Columbia University; residential rehabilitation program advisor for The Women's Home, Houston and many more. She has also additional teaching experience with New York University, Havens Center After-School Program, and University Jumpstart/University of Texas. Her fellowships and awards include Round 6 Theatre Communications Group/Doris Duke Foundation, Future Leaders: New Generations Program, HATCH Artistic Contribution Award, and The Women's Home Expressive Therapy Award.



**Melanie Lawson:** Award-winning journalist Melanie Lawson is a proud Houstonian and a product of Houston schools. Journalism has always been in Melanie's blood. She started first as a full-time general assignments reporter at Channel 13, then went on to become the co-anchor of Live at 5 and Channel 13's midday show, *Eyewitness News at 11am*. Melanie also hosts a weekly Community Affairs program called *Crossroads*, focusing on issues and events around our city.

Melanie has had a varied and exhilarating stint at Channel 13. She has covered virtually every city, state and national election during her career. She has traveled to Cuba, Panama and Africa, among other places. She's won numerous awards for her reporting, including an Emmy for her coverage of President Clinton's visit to South Africa, the only local reporter in the nation to make that trip. And Melanie has interviewed a wide range of notables, including three U.S. Presidents,

Henry Kissinger, the Dalai Lama, poet Maya Angelou, Grammy Award winners Destiny's Child, former heavyweight champion boxer George Foreman, director Spike Lee, legendary journalist Barbara Walters, evangelists Joel and Victoria Osteen, Hall of Famer Magic Johnson and actors Lily Tomlin, Shirley McLaine and Denzel Washington.

But Melanie's favorite stories are those about Houston's rich, multi-ethnic community - especially stories about children and those quietly working to make a difference in their lives.

Melanie's involvement in the Houston community is far-reaching. She is on the board of numerous community organizations including the Houston Ballet, SHAPE Community Center, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Volunteer Houston, and the Houston Association of Black Journalists. She also belongs to the Houston Chapter of the Links, Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, and the American Leadership Forum. She is also a member of the Texas Lone Star Chapter of Emmys and Women in Film and Television. Melanie has also been honored as the YWCA's "Outstanding

Woman of the Year” and as a “Woman of Distinction” by the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation, and with the Ben and Julie Rogers Ecumenism Award from the Anti-Defamation League.

She received her undergraduate degree in Politics from Princeton University and a joint degree in Law and Journalism from Columbia University. Melanie worked at a Wall Street law firm for three years before returning to Houston. She is admitted to both the Texas and New York State Bars. Last, but certainly not least, she is a proud member of the church founded by her parents, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church.



**Karoline Liu** is the Director of Recruitment and Admissions for the College of Fine Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. Karoline holds a BFA in Theatre and a Masters in Business Administration from Southern Methodist University. She began her work with high school and transfer students as a student ambassador for SMU’s Meadows School of the Arts. She has invested her professional career in advocating for young artists and encouraging their pursuit of a degree in the fine arts. She feels grateful for the opportunity to speak often at arts high schools and college access events to educate students and parents on applying to fine arts programs and career pathways in the arts. She and her husband, Daniel, live in Austin, Texas, where they enjoy live music, breakfast tacos and an eclectic community of good friends.



**Colleen Mayer** is Program Manager of Middle School Programs for PAIR Houston, the Partnership for the Advancement and Immersion of Refugees. A New Jersey native, Colleen graduated from Rutgers University with a bachelor of arts degree in Africana studies and political science. Her honors thesis focused on the impacts of ethnicity and race on the American criminal justice and education systems, and she is very interested in these fields. Prior to joining PAIR, she was an active mentor, instructor, and curriculum developer for a pre-college program that focuses on urban and first-generation-American scholars.



**Padma Narayan** is currently a Senior Research & Development Leader for the Industrial Solutions Portfolio at The Dow Chemical Company in Freeport, Texas. She leads a group of scientists and engineers who are involved in product development for various industries such as agricultural, pharmaceutical, consumer products, paints/coatings, and oil & gas. Padma joined Dow in 2010 and was previously located in Midland, Michigan. She has held prior positions at Johnson & Johnson in Raritan, New Jersey, and Pfizer in Groton, Connecticut, as a Principal Scientist/Group Leader. Her area of expertise in the pharmaceutical industry involved particle technology, and formulation research and process development for oral dosage forms (tablets, capsules, suspensions) and transdermal formulations. She has developed and commercialized

drug compounds for the pain, metabolic, and central nervous system therapeutic areas. Padma has published various scientific papers and actively reviews journals in the chemical engineering and pharmaceutical fields. She is an active member of the Society of Women Engineers and American Institute of Chemical Engineers. In addition to her industrial and scientific pursuits, Padma is also a violinist and has played in various community orchestras across the country. She is active in the Sigma Alpha Iota music philanthropic society and as a volunteer in local STEM efforts in the Houston area. Padma also raised funds by running the 2006 Chicago Marathon for the Asha for Education organization, benefiting underprivileged children in South Asia. Padma Narayan received her PhD in Chemical and Biological Engineering from Drexel University in 1999. She received her Bachelors in Chemical Engineering at Villanova University in 1994.

**Susan Pansmith**, Senior Manager with Houston Independent School District’s Office of Special Education Services (OSES), is trained in *Universal Design for Learning* from Harvard University. Susan started with HISD in 1986 after 9 years in another state and has been a senior manager or equivalent for 15 years. OSES supports students with disabilities in gaining college, career readiness, and independent living skills through active engagement in grade level curriculum. There are over 16,000 students in Special Education or roughly a little over 8% of the student population. OSES’s Elementary Field Office is responsible for 178 elementary, early childhood and K-8 schools.



**Paul Pass** is Manager of Community Outreach and Family Programs at Asia Society Texas Center, where he has worked since 2011. His roles include family, school, teacher, docent, and community programs, including an annual summer camp. Previously, he held education and outreach roles at the World Affairs Council of Houston, the United States House of Representatives, the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, and Indiana University. Paul is a member of the National Art Education Association, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Art Crowd, and a licensed Boy Scouts counselor for American Cultures, Architecture, Art, and Citizenship in the World Merit Badges. A native of Columbus, Ohio, Paul earned a master's degree from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree from Miami

University.



**Dr. Toni Rao-Delgado** has a bachelor and masters in Drama and Radio/TV/Film with undergraduate minors in Dance and History. She has worked for network television in sports, production and news for 30+ years and has also taught Drama, Speech, Dance and TV production and writing for 25+ years. She is also a playwright and musician. In addition, she has designed curricula, written articles and presented at seminars on the principles of Universal Design for Instruction (UDI). It was also the basis for her dissertation entitled *Community college faculty's perceptions of the Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) concept*, May, 2009. She was a member of the International Summit at the Landmark College Institute for Research and Training in Putney, Vt. She has presented at Houston Community College (HCC) for Title V Faculty Advising Workshops, the Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence (CTLE) Certificate

Program and special ADA Counselors Panels. She was the lead researcher for two pilot studies at HCC. One was titled *A grounded theory for using Universal Learning Designs for first year college students with ADHD and college students requiring developmental courses*. The second was titled *Instrumental case studies exploring how community college faculty view implementation of the Universal Design for Instruction concept as a systematic approach to improve student success across academic and workforce disciplines and other diverse student populations*. She also conducted a program evaluation of the *HCC Student Success Model (with focus on GUST, Guided Studies courses) based on Chen's (2005) Change and Action Models*. Dr. Rao-Delgado is currently Operations Manager at Houston Community College TV and is producing a video series entitled *Innovation In Education* with emphasis on current issues concerning higher education today and revealing the innovative processes that are improving student success in our global technological society.



**Gayla Rawlinson, MA**, is the director of the Center for Grants Development at the Harris County Department of Education. She has 20 years of experience in organizational assessment, grants development, program management, implementation, and evaluation. She began her career as a licensed social worker with state agencies, then worked with small community-based and larger educational institutions. Prior to coming to HCDE as its first grants specialist, Ms. Rawlinson worked at the University of Houston's Office of Community Projects as the Program Manager of The Funding Source and as an adjunct professor. During the past seventeen years, she has coordinated proposal development processes, bringing in over \$164 million to the greater Houston area. She also became the first State Representative of the Grant Professionals Association (GPA) and led the development of the first Texas chapter. This led to her currently functioning as a Regional Representative for GPA serving Southeast Texas states. She has a bachelor's degree in social work from Stephen F. Austin State University and a master's degree in sociology/social research from Sam Houston State University.



**Tamara L. Siler** is Senior Associate Director of Admission and Coordinator of Minority Recruitment at Rice University. This is Tamara's 23rd year in the Office of Admission at Rice. In addition to coordinating Rice's minority recruitment efforts, she directs the transfer admission process and administers several scholarships and programs, including the Barbara Jordan Scholars program and QuestBridge. She graduated from Rice University with a B.A. in History. A native Houstonian, she grew up in the Fifth Ward and graduated from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.

Tamara is a past president of the Texas Association for College Admission Counseling (TACAC), an affiliate of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), and currently serves on the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas (ICUT) E-Committee.

She has served on the advisory board for the Linda Lorelle Scholars Foundation, on the Program Planning Committee for the College Board National Forum and the selection committee for the Coca Cola Scholars. She has appeared in over 70 productions with professional and community theatre companies throughout the Houston area.



**Stacey A. Smith** serves as the Program Director of Resource Development for Aldine Independent School District. During her three years as Program Director, she has assisted Aldine educators in being awarded \$10,990,105 in funding. As an educator, Stacey was awarded \$138,000, implemented and managed the grant programs at her campus. Stacey currently serves as Vice-President of the Grant Professionals Association Southeast Texas Chapter. Stacey is actively involved in the community. She serves as Secretary for the Optimist International Chapter in Aldine. She volunteers with the Aldine Education Foundation and partners in education with the East Aldine Management District. She is a graduate of the University of North Texas with a Bachelor of Music and has a Master of Education Administration from Stephen F. Austin State University. Prior to serving as Program Director of Resource Development, Stacey served as a music educator for twenty-one years.



**Olivia Smith-Daugherty**, Executive Director of Grants for Pasadena ISD, has worn many different Education hats since graduating from Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State) in 1996. She worked in Houston ISD as a science teacher providing instruction for students in grades 9-12 in Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC), Biology, and Chemistry. Additionally, she has served as a Title I Coordinator for a middle school and a 21st-Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) After-School grant Program Coordinator. Before joining Pasadena Independent School District, she worked at Harris County Department of Education in the division of the Cooperative for After-School Enrichment overseeing grant implementation of the 21st CCLC after-school grants in over 10 different districts and charter schools. Now, she serves as the Executive Director of Grants for Pasadena ISD. Olivia holds a BS in Biology and a MEd in Administration from Lamar University. She earned her Grant Professional Certification designation from the Grants Professionals Certification Institute in October 2013. Currently, she is serving her second term as president of the Grant Professionals Association – Southeast Texas Chapter.

designation from the Grants Professionals Certification Institute in October 2013. Currently, she is serving her second term as president of the Grant Professionals Association – Southeast Texas Chapter.

**Danille K. Taylor** is dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Sciences. Before coming to TSU, she was instrumental in the revitalization of the Division of Humanities at Dillard University. In 2011, Taylor led a TSU delegation to confer with Beijing Jiatong University for completion of the TSU COLABS Confucius Institute application. She was also an active participant in a study seminar on the Afro Cuban Women’s Experience at La Casa de las Americas in Havana, Cuba.



**Sophia L. Torres** is the Founder and Artistic Director of Psophonia Dance Company. She has choreographed over twenty original works under Psophonia and has received awards and recognition for her innovative choreography including the Artist Fellowship Award in Choreography and three Artist Project Awards for arts in education programming from Houston Arts Alliance. In 2011, Sophia’s work *The Long Hallway* was selected for performance in Weekend of Texas Contemporary Dance at Miller Outdoor Theatre. Since graduating from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and Southern Methodist University, Sophia has performed with several outstanding companies and worked with such talented choreographers as

Bill T. Jones, Susan Marshall and Stephan Koplowitz. Sophia has created new works for Rice University’s Dance Theatre, University of Houston’s Dance Ensemble and Houston Community College’s Performing Ensemble. In 2009, Sophia received the prestigious Teaching Artist Fellowship from Montalvo Arts Center in Saratoga, California—one of four awarded nationwide. Currently she is on faculty at the University of Houston and Houston Community College – Northwest. She continues to create, implement and manage in-school residency programs centered on arts integration as well as work with aspiring performers at Stages Repertory Theatre’s Young Actor’s Conservatory.



**Dario Villota** became part of Team HISD in July 2011 and served as an assistant principal at Kashmere and Sharpstown High Schools. He started his career as an elementary bilingual teacher at Johnson Elementary School and English as a Second Language teacher at Hambrick Middle School in Aldine ISD. After teaching for four years, he moved into a Curriculum and Skills Specialist position for Bilingual and Gifted and Talented education. Villota earned his bachelor’s degree in Industrial Design from the *Universidad Autónoma de Colombia* and his master’s degree in educational psychology at Texas A&M University. He completed his principal certification through Rice University and also completed the business fellowship at the same institution.

Mr. Villota is currently the principal of Pugh Elementary in HISD. During his first year, he and his team were able to move the school out of the improved required list. Now, they are not only a meet Standards school, but also they received two distinctions for science and academic growth.



**Dr. Betsy Cook Weber** is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Houston’s Moores School of Music and Director of the Houston Symphony Chorus. She teaches a full load of coursework, oversees the large and varied choral area at the Moores School, and is also highly active as a clinician, adjudicator, lecturer, and conductor. In the summer of 2013, Weber became the 13th person and first woman to receive the Texas Choral Director Association’s coveted *Texas Choirmaster Award*.

Under Weber’s leadership, *The Moores School Concert Chorale*, which she directs, has established a reputation as one of the world’s finest collegiate choirs. They have been a featured choir at the Texas Music Educators’ Association (TMEA) Convention in 2005, 2008, and 2013 as well as for the national ACDA convention in Miami in 2007. Internationally, *Chorale* has received acclaim at three prestigious competitions —the *Eisteddfod* in Wales, winning or placing in every category in which they were entered, as well as at the the *Florilège Vocal* in Tours, France. In May of 2013, Dr. Weber led Chorale to a first-place finish as one of only ten choirs worldwide selected to compete in the famous *International Chamber Choir Competition* in Marktobendorf, Germany. Comments regarding these performances include “de luxe singing, eliciting admiration and gratitude,” “wonderfully elegant and humorous,” “sophisticated choir --- expertly prepared and with a finely-tuned corporate ear.” She has prepared singers for early music orchestras *Ars Lyrica* and *Mercury Houston* and has also been called upon to prepare singers for touring shows, including Josh Groban, NBC’s *Clash of the Choirs*, Telemundo’s *Latin Grammys*, and *Star Wars in Concert*.

As Assistant, Associate, and finally Director of the Houston Symphony Chorus, she helped prepare major works for renowned conductors including Robert Shaw, Christoph Eschenbach, Roger Wagner, Nicholas McKegan, and Christopher Seaman.

Before coming to the University of Houston, Weber was a successful music teacher in the public schools at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels, during which time choirs under her direction enjoyed numerous successes. Dr. Weber holds degrees from the University of North Texas, Westminster Choir College (Princeton, New Jersey), and the University of Houston.

## SESSION PRESENTERS

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**Kim Anderson**, Teacher

**Tina Angelo:** After thirty-seven years in public education, Tina Angelo joined Writers in the Schools in 2012 to provide professional development to both writers and teachers. Before joining WITS, Tina taught English in several Houston area school districts and also served as the Manager of Adolescent Literacy and Response to Intervention for the Houston Independent School District. Tina earned her B.A. in English and history from the University of Texas and her M.Ed. from the University of Houston.

**Alex Arizpe, Jr.**, has been on the faculty of Houston Ballet, the Houston Met, Uptown Dance Center, and Rodriguez Dance Academy. He was a dancer and choreographer for both the Delia Stewart Dance Company and the Houston Metropolitan Dance Company as well as a member of the Freakazoids, a break dance company in Houston from 1979-1983. His musical theater credits include *The King and I* and *Chess* with Theatre Under The Stars. Alex has received numerous awards for competitions in jitterbug and disco as well as National Country and Western Dance Champion for three straight years. Choreography credits include “Jitterhopin”

for Texas Ballet Theater; HITS Theater productions of *The King and I*, *Seussical the Musical*, and *Carnival* at Miller Outdoor Theater; Dance Houston; Choreographers X 6 at The Jewish Community Center's Kaplan Theater; Houston Metropolitan Dance Company, Clear Lake Metropolitan Ballet; and Dance Salad at The Wortham Center. He and his wife, Victoria, are the owners of Uptown Productions, Inc., a theatrical dance production company that has performed for the Super Bowl Commissioners Party, Nike, Ski Do, Verizon Wireless, and numerous corporate events around Houston. The company has received awards for "Best Dance Theater" and "Best Overall Choreography." Alex joined Houston Ballet's Education and Outreach Department in June, 2008, and he is currently on faculty at St. John's School. Alex is also proud to be a retired Houston Fire Fighter.

**Eryn Bauer** is an arts administrator, educator, and bassoonist located in Houston, Texas. Bauer received a Bachelor of Music in Bassoon Performance from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where she also received a certificate in arts leadership. Bauer has held administrative positions with the Eastman Community Music School, Young Audiences of Rochester, and the Grammy-nominated ensemble Ars Lyrica Houston, and is currently the Program Director for Young Audiences of Houston. At YAH, Bauer oversees performances and residencies in over 200 venues throughout 53 school districts, and produces educationally-driven art festivals for families in the Houston community.

As a bassoonist with the Arabesque Winds, Bauer has performed in the Wooster Chamber Music Series, Harry Jacobs Chamber Music Series, Festival Internacional Chihuahua in Chihuahua, Mexico, Cervantino Festival in Guanajuato, Mexico, and the Sanibel Music Festival. She has been a resident artist at Augusta State University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Southern Mississippi, and the Michigan State University Community Music School.

**Glenn Bailey, Jr.:** A midwest native and transplant to the Houston area, Mr. Bailey joined the staff of FotoFest International as Program Manager for their Literacy Through Photography (LTP) program in 2012. Prior to his appointment at FotoFest, he held positions across the U.S. in education administration, community outreach, gallery management, creative design, and marketing, and still managed to maintain his role as an educator and multi-media artist. Mr. Bailey is devoted to improving the quality of education through arts-based and arts-integrated learning experiences, during both in-school and after-school time. He is a strong advocate for using visual imagery to make cross-curricular connections across multiple subject areas and believes the LTP program is an approach to teaching that invigorates student collaboration, builds awareness of one's self and connects the classroom to the communities in which they reside. Aside from his job at FotoFest, Mr. Bailey is an avid cyclist, self-proclaimed foodie, and trivia enthusiast, and enjoys spending time with his wife Stephanie and their two dogs, Kamea and Harmony.

**Jennifer Beradino** currently serves as the education department's Kinder Foundation Education Center Manager at Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. In this capacity she oversees all aspects of the Kinder Foundation Education Center, an orientation space and hub of information about art and the museum. Jennifer also manages the teacher professional development program Learning Through Art and oversees several outreach programs for the Houston community. Additionally, Jennifer developed the Learning Through Art Curriculum for middle school in collaboration with a cohort of teachers who will help develop the curriculum and classroom test each component. Jennifer received her MS in Museum Leadership from Bank Street College of Education, New York, New York, and MA in art history and BS in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico. Jennifer was awarded Museum Educator of the Year from the Texas Art Education Association (2012) as well as the National Art Education Association (2013). Jennifer has led numerous presentations at professional conferences including Texas Art Education Association, American Association of Museums and National Art Education Association.

**Sandra Bernhard** is currently Director of HGOco, Houston Grand Opera's award winning unique initiative that explores ways of making opera relevant to its changing audiences through new works and innovative community projects, reaching more than 1 million since 2007. HGOco, has commissioned 16 new works including the world's first Mariachi Opera entitled *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, was awarded the Leading Lights Diversity Award in Arts and Culture from the National MultiCultural Institute (NCMI) for HGOco's Song of Houston series in 2009, and was the only Texas recipient of an ArtPlace grant for Home and Place program to build communities through art in 2011. Bernhard began her career as an opera director and has directed main stage productions at major companies throughout the U.S., including San Francisco Opera, where she was resident for nearly 20 years, Washington National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Portland Opera, and Florida Grand Opera. Bernhard held the J. Ralph Corbett Distinguished Chair of Opera at the College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) from 2003 to 2007. She has written librettos and opera education materials for productions at San Francisco Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Virginia Opera, Utah Opera and Florida Grand Opera, and has taught for the Merola Opera Program, the Adler Fellowship Program, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Louisiana State University, Utah Opera Young Artist Program, Florida Grand Opera Young Artist Program, Co-OPERative Program, and Chautauqua Opera among others. At CCM, Ms. Bernhard received the 2007 Harmony Fund for projects exploring diversity in a theatrical event and four National Opera Association Awards for her directing work. Ms Bernhard serves on the Defiant Requiem Foundation, headquartered in Washington D.C.

**Rick Brennan**, a public school teacher with 13 years' experience, believes that classrooms are sacred spaces. In 2007, Brennan co founded Histrionix Learning Company with fellow teacher Jason Darnell. Histrionix provides fun, interactive game-based curriculum and teacher training to public, private and home schools that improve student achievement by engaging all learning styles, enhancing critical thinking skills and encouraging creative problem solving, which are the building blocks of thoughtful, twenty first students –

and citizens. Last year, HISTORIA – the company’s curriculum aligned social studies simulation and strategy learning game – was featured in the PLAYMAKERS film series produced by Institute of Play and The Gates Foundation. Recently, Histrionix was hired by GlassLab to join the SimCityedu project team and write a teacher friendly, classroom ready curriculum catalog for SimCity.

**Amy Garner Buchanan** is originally from Melbourne, Australia, and received a B.A. (Hons) from Monash University and a year of full-time dance training from Dance Factory. Amy Garner Buchanan’s professional career began in children’s theatre. She toured five states of Australia with two original shows in repertory, Schumann the Shoeman and Matty Forever, for Tony Bones Entertainment, with whom she also performed nine different scripted kids’ party shows. In Houston Buchanan has performed in touring and in-house productions for Main Street Theater for Youth and Express Children’s Theatre. Her original solo show, Australian Suitcase, began a tour with Young Audiences of Houston in March 2014. In 2013 Amy Garner Buchanan transitioned into Houston’s vibrant mainstage theatre scene. Sondheim and Shakespeare have been the focus of her work for Main Street Theater, Stark Naked Theatre and Texas Repertory Theatre, among others. She has also gained some experience in film and voice-over, and is represented in these fields by Pastorini Bosby Talent. Her training continued at Next Level Acting Studio (on-camera classes) and Kim Tobin Acting Studio (Meisner and Shakespeare classes).

**Jeff Butler** is a cellist with the Houston Symphony.

**Long Chu** is the Associate Director of Writers in the Schools. Long plans and implements WITS’ creative writing programs. A writer originally from Vietnam, Long earned an MFA in poetry from the University of Houston Creative Writing Program. His poems are anthologized in several books, including *Watermark* and *Both Sides Now*. His libretto, *Bound*, for Houston Grand Opera’s East + West initiative, premiered during the 2014 Vietnamese Lunar New Year.

**Rachel Clarke** has over 15 years of experience in social work and education working with at-risk youth. She has taught students from ages five to adult and mentored teachers and other campus staff on working with English Language Learners. For the past five years she has been Assistant Principal at Cunningham Elementary in Houston ISD, a campus whose population is comprised of students from across the globe representing 15 different home languages. As an advocate for educating the whole child, she has partnered with the Main Street Theater and continues to collaborate and actively seek out funding sources to maintain the program at her campus.

**Carlton Colmenares** teaches AP Environmental Science, Earth and Space Science and Environmental Systems at Seven Lakes High School in Katy.

**Allison Conlan** is the Coordinator for Education & Community Engagement at the Houston Symphony.

**Sara Cooper** comes to Houston from Las Cruces, New Mexico, where she received an M.F.A. in poetry. While there, she directed a college-access program for high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds and taught writing through The Border Book Festival’s Emerging Voices Program, The Women’s Intercultural Center, and Las Cruces’s Writers in the Schools program. Since becoming a Writer in Residence with Houston’s WITS two years ago, she has introduced alternative media to the writing classroom, including filmmaking and blogging through collaborations with the Aurora Picture Show and a Houston-area high school. She currently teaches at the University of Houston, where she is pursuing a PhD in English. Her writing has appeared in *The Mid-American Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, and *Arizona Highways*.

**Rozie Curtis** is the manager of Community Outreach at Theatre Under The Stars. She has helped create outreach programs for all areas of the Houston and Greater Houston Community. TUTS outreach programs reach thousands of students and teachers every year. She is an actress, director, choreographer, writer, teacher, and arts administrator. In addition to reaching out to schools, she also teaches acting at Theatre Under The Stars in The Academy. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from St. Edward’s University with a degree in Theatre Arts. After college, she went on to do professional stage work. Stage credits include numerous productions in children, youth, and adult theatre across the country. At TUTS she has directed Disney’s *Camp Rock*, *The Final Jam*, Disney’s *My Son Pinocchio Jr.*, *School House Rock Live Jr.*, Disney’s *When You Wish*, and Disney’s *Dual Language Aladdin*. She has directed, choreographed and acted in over 50 theatrical productions from musicals to straight plays. She is also an award-winning filmmaker and constantly sought after writer, choreographer, director and acting coach and teaches workshops in all of the previous mentioned areas.

**Matthew Cushing** currently serves as an Assistant Director for the Rice Elementary Model Science Lab (REMSL) for the School Science and Technology (SST) program at Rice University in Houston, TX. He holds a Master’s degree in Instructional Technology from the University of Houston – Clear Lake and a Bachelor’s degree in Education from the University of Houston. He began his professional career in education teaching for Spring Branch Independent School District and moved on to work for both the educational technology department and as a district science specialist. After leaving Spring Branch ISD he joined Region 10 Education Service Center and worked on the Texas Virtual School Network project in the course review department. He has presented at various local and state conferences in both science education and instructional technology. Matthew enjoys traveling, biking, and helping his wife with her business.

**Jackie deMontmollin** serves as the Associate Director of Theatre Education at The University of Houston School of Theatre & Dance, where she developed and heads the Summer MA for Theatre Educators and The BFA in Theatre Education. She also teaches Acting I for the School of Theatre & Dance. Jackie joined the faculty of The School of Theatre & Dance in 2007 after teaching theatre in public schools across Texas for 15 years. Additionally Jackie teaches “Essentials of Fine Arts” to Elementary Education Majors at The University of St. Thomas. As a public school educator Jackie directed over sixty productions, earned several teaching awards and her students earned State and National accolades. Jackie has served on the Board of Directors of The Texas Educational Theatre Association, works on the Education & Outreach Committee for The Society of Performing Arts Houston, is a member of The Center for Educational Development of Fine Arts (CEDFA) Training Cadre. She is also an active adjudicator and clinician for University Interscholastic League One Act Play. Jackie was awarded the Ross M. Lence Award for Excellence in Teaching by The University of Houston College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences. She holds her M.Ed. from Concordia University, Austin.

**Eileen Edmonds**, Manager of The River Performing and Visual Arts Center, an Education Program of Theatre Under The Stars, has over 21 years’ experience providing arts engagement for underserved populations in the non-profit sector. Eileen has been with The River for six years overseeing their Saturday Morning Program, Classes in the Community, and Summer Camp for individuals with disabilities. Before her work at The River she worked for 15 years as The Cultural Arts Director for The Boys’ Club of New York overseeing their Art Studio, Media Lab, Cultural Center, and Leadership Development Program for at-risk boys in Queens. Prior to her work at The Boys’ Club Eileen studied Visual Arts with a minor in Art History at The University of Houston and Queens College.

**Robert Franz:** As Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony, and as Music Director of the Boise Philharmonic, Windsor Symphony Orchestra, and Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival Opera and Orchestra, Robert Franz’s appeal as a first-rate conductor and enthusiastic award-winning educator is acclaimed by critics, composers and audiences of all ages. Maestro Franz is in increasing demand as a guest conductor. Recent guest conducting highlights include his debut with the Baltimore Symphony, St. Louis Symphony and The Cleveland Orchestra in the United States and the Orchestra da Camera Fiorentina in Italy. Earlier guest conducting appearances include the Rochester Philharmonic, North Carolina Symphony, the Columbus Symphony, Virginia Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, Musiq (Houston), South Bend Symphony, Asheville Lyric Opera, the Portland Symphony (ME), and the Idaho Falls Symphony. With a wide and varying knowledge of symphonic and operatic works, Maestro Franz has worked with some of today’s finest classical soloists, including James Galway, Joshua Bell and Rachel Barton Pine, as well as top pops artists such as Chris Botti, Idina Menzel and Judy Collins.

As Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony, Robert Franz leads the Symphony in a broad range of creative educational and family concerts, reaching tens of thousands of audience members of all ages in the Houston metropolitan area. This past summer, Franz conducted the televised 100th anniversary concert of the Houston Symphony.

ASCAP has recognized Franz on two occasions for his advocacy in arts education. Under his direction, both the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in 2008 and the Louisville Orchestra in 2001 were awarded the Leonard Bernstein Award for Educational Programming. The Louisville Orchestra’s award led to the creation of an education program for Kentucky Educational Television entitled, *Creating Music and Stories*. Winner of the 2008 BPO/ECMEA Music Educators Award for Excellence, Franz is a avid supporter of arts education, and has created arts education programs for the Carolina Chamber Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Louisville Orchestra, West End Chamber Ensemble and the Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony, including that organization’s innovative Bolton Research Project which improved literacy .

The Idaho Education Committee recognized Franz’s expertise in music education, inviting him to address the Idaho Legislature on the importance of music in education. Further strengthening his commitment to bringing music education to young people Franz has authored his first children’s book with a CD entitled, *Stella’s Magical Musical Tour of America*. The book, which Franz uses as a family concert theme, introduces children to classical music by incorporating various musical excerpts intertwined throughout the story of a girl’s journey in a hot air balloon.

Franz received his Master of Music degree in conducting and his Bachelor of Music degree in oboe performance from the North Carolina School of the Arts. He has participated in conducting workshops in the Czech Republic, St. Petersburg (Russia), Nashville, the Festival at Sandpoint and was a participant in the 1997 National Conductor Preview.

**Richard Ford**, composer of music for more than 25 years, is the Composer in Residence for the Houston Heights Orchestra in Texas and has had his music performed internationally. Ford composes music that is accessible, fun, bold, vivid, and full of movement for soloists, chamber groups, theatre, dance, and film. As a composer, Ford is known for memorable music for beginners and virtuosos alike that brings together his love for pop, rock, musicals, and symphonic music into an appealing and joyful language. In addition to being a composer, Ford has produced, directed, and worked on over 200 pieces for theater and film, and he is known as an innovator creatively and as an arts administrator.

**Mihaela Frusina** is a violinist with the Houston Symphony.

**Courtney Galle** is the marketing and public relations manager for The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. She oversees the public relations efforts of the venue, manages The Pavilion's website and app, serves as managing editor of the venue's newsletter *CenterStage* and program *On Stage* and coordinates marketing and public relations efforts for The Pavilion's volunteer organization, The Pavilion Partners. Additionally, she assists the director of marketing and education coordinating marketing for the venue and its performing arts programming, as well as the production and implementation of The Pavilion's educational outreach programs.

Prior to joining the staff of The Pavilion, Galle was the communications manager for the Lake Conroe Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, a division of the Greater Conroe/Lake Conroe Area Chamber of Commerce. Galle has been with The Pavilion since 2008.

Galle received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism—Public Relations from Sam Houston State University in 2003. She is a member of the Sam Houston State University Alumni Association. Galle is a 2007 graduate of Leadership Montgomery County and a member of the LMC Alumni Committee and serves as co-chair for LMC Social. She was recently elected to serve on the LMC board of directors. She is currently on the Conroe Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors where she serves as a team leader for the Chamber Diplomats and re-branding committee. Galle also serves as a team leader on The Woodlands Chamber of Commerce Taste of the Town Committee.

She resides in The Woodlands, Texas, and has one dog named Scout.

**Sergei Galperin** is the first violinist with the Houston Symphony. A native of Moscow, Russia, Sergei Galperin began violin studies at the age of five and shortly thereafter gave his first public performance in the Concert Hall of the Moscow Conservatory.

After his studies at the Moscow Conservatory with professor N. Boyarsky, Mr. Galperin received his Bachelor and Master degrees from The Juilliard School, where he was a full scholarship student in the class of Dorothy DeLay and Hyo Kang. Later he earned Artist Diplomas from Indiana University and Peabody Conservatory in the class of Z. Gilels, N. Shkolnikova and H. Greenberg.

Mr. Galperin made his American solo orchestral debut in May 1982 at the age of 16, playing the Wieniawski Violin Concerto with the Symphony Orchestra of New York at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center. He has also performed as a soloist with the Houston Symphony Orchestra in their Educational and Pops Series, as well as with the Indiana University, Aspen Symphony, and Dallas Festival Orchestras.

As a winner of Artist International auditions, Mr. Galperin made his New York solo recital debut in March 1988 at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. After winning New York's National Arts Club Competition in 1987, he was featured in recital on live ABC and PBS news shows. Subsequently he appeared in recital at Alice Tully and Merkin Concert Halls at Lincoln Center. In May of 1993, Sergei won an honorable mention award as a finalist of a prestigious Concert Artist Guild competition in New York.

Currently a first violinist of the Houston Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Galperin has also been invited to serve as Concertmaster for the Rochester Philharmonic in New York in the 2004-05 Season, as well as the Adelaide Symphony in Australia. Prior to his current position, Mr. Galperin was a member of the Pittsburgh Symphony first violin section from 1999-2003. He has also worked with the Chicago and Baltimore symphony orchestras, as well as the Grant Park, Aspen and Grand Teton festival orchestras, A. Schneider String Seminar, and Taos Chamber Music Festival. As a member of Chamber and Symphony Orchestras Mr. Galperin has toured internationally in Australia, Malaysia, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, Argentina, and all of Europe, including festivals in Lucerne, Berlin, Vienna, Copenhagen, and Edinburgh. In the US he has performed on numerous occasions at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in addition to Symphony Halls in Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Houston, Philadelphia and many others.

Sergei Galperin served as a faculty member at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh in 1999-2003, as well as a Professor of Violin at the University of St. Thomas in Houston in 1998-99 and teaching assistant at the Indiana University School of Music from 1990-1994.

**Jonathan Gonzalez**, Director of Education at Main Street Theater, is a New Mexico native who lived for 15 years in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he served as Education Director, actor, and teacher for the Marin Shakespeare Company. He was a Teaching Artist-in-Residence at The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Marin Theatre Company, Peninsula Youth Theatre in Palo Alto, and Youth-In-Arts in San Rafael. Jonathan has taught theatre in over two dozen schools, and directed and acted in more than 200 productions. Since arriving in Houston he has worked at The Texas Repertory Theatre Company, Katy Visual and Performing Arts Center, The Alley (H.Y.P.E), Country Playhouse, The Tulane Shakespeare Festival in New Orleans, Prague Shakespeare Festival, Houston Revels, Puppet Pizzazz, The Curt Miller Magic and Comedy Show at Moody Gardens, Rice University, Texas A&M, and The University of Houston, where he received his MFA in directing. Jonathan came to Main Street in 2009 when he directed a student production of *Scapino*. Since then he has directed and performed in MST's MainStage and Theater for Youth productions. Jonathan is the co-creator of MST's Peer-To-Peer Shakespeare program, which includes a two-person touring show, classes in the public schools, a Summer Shakespeare show for teens, and projects geared towards incarcerated youth. Jonathan is the Founding Director of Shakespeare in The Shade Trees and a proud member of The Shakespeare Theatre Association, TCG, and Houston Arts Partners.

**Rodica Gonzalez** is a violinist with the Houston Symphony.

**Erika Graham** is a teacher at Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory School.

**Angelica Halphen**, Teacher Development Specialist in STEM

**Craig Hauschildt** is a dynamic percussionist and educator who has been part of the Houston community since 2001. He delights in performing music from a number of world traditions, including European classical music, Afro-Cuban folkloric music, Brazilian samba batucada, Ewe drumming from Ghana, Japanese Taiko drumming, and Indonesian gamelan, and enjoys exploring the historical and cultural elements of each of these musical genres. He has the honor of performing orchestral music with the Houston Grand Opera, the Houston Ballet, the Houston Symphony, the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, and Mercury: The Orchestra Redefined. Additionally, he performs chamber music in the intimate settings of Da Camera, Musiqa, and Aperio: Music of the Americas. During the summer, he performs in the Grand Teton Music Festival in Wyoming, where he collaborates with some of the finest conductors and orchestral musicians from around the world.

Mr. Hauschildt is currently the Director of Education and Community Initiatives at Da Camera, where he enjoys working with Houston students through the Music Encounters program. This program utilizes classical and popular music to assist the instruction of the core foundation subjects and fosters creativity by engaging the students through a wide variety of learning styles.

**Wei Jiang** is a violist with the Houston Symphony.

**Kimberly Hopson** is a secondary studio art, AP art history, and photography instructor at the Academy of Choice, in Spring Branch ISD. She has a BFA in Art Education from Texas State – San Marcos, and a M.Ed in Art Education from the University of Houston. Her experience in community based art education includes collaborating with Family Programs at the Museum of Fine Arts-Houston, the Elementary Studio Art Programs through Family Point Resources, and the Houston Art Car Parade (The Orange Show). She is a FotoFest Literacy Through Photography cohort teacher, as well as co-author of the 2012 Biennial Curriculum of Contemporary Russian Photography, and 2014 Biennial Curriculum of Contemporary Arab Photography. She is currently working on her Ph.D. in Art Education at the University of Houston.

**Rathna Kumar**, internationally renowned dancer, teacher, choreographer, arts educator, is Founder-Director of Texas' first Indian dance school, Anjali Center for Performing Arts, established 1975. Her countless awards and achievements include: an Honorary Doctorate in Performing Arts from India; published illustrated books on two Indian dance forms; first non-resident Indian in the world to receive the Government of India's most prestigious 2010 Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for performing arts; Congressional Recognition, Nomination to the Texas Women's Hall of Fame, Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asian Pacific American Heritage Association, Houston Community College's Asian Legacy Award, Houston Metro's Distinguished Asian Award; Certificates of Volunteerism from former President George Bush, Governor Rick Perry and former Mayor Bill White; Teaching Artist with Young Audiences of Houston; currently teaches a course in Bharatanatyam at Rice University; invited by the UNESCO to make presentations at the First World Conference on Arts Education – Lisbon, Portugal, and the First World Creativity Summit - Hong Kong.

**Jami Lupold:** The Building Cultural Bridges (BCB) program designed and created by Jami and her teaching partner at Pearl Hall Elementary (Pasadena ISD), is described by Paul Phoenix, tenor from the world-famous men's a cappella group The King's Singers: "Among the many education and outreach activities in which The King's Singers have participated throughout the world, BCB stands alone as a model program for others to follow." Through the BCB and the relationships established with our Arts Partners, students of all learning abilities become more engaged, empathetic, and responsible citizens as they interact directly with more than 70 guests from all points of the globe.

A 2015 GRAMMY Music Educator Award Candidate, Jami has worked as a music education specialist for 27 years. She has been recognized as 2013 Texas Region 4 Teacher of the Year and was one of three finalists for 2013 Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year. Jami was selected as the Houston Symphony Outstanding Elementary Educator, received the Yale University Distinguished Music Educator Award, served on a Collaborations through Community Partnerships panel at Yale's "Music in Schools" program, and was a participant in the inaugural "Arts and Passion Driven Learning Institute" at Harvard University guided by Yo Yo Ma and members of The Silk Road Ensemble.

Her holistic approach involving music and all it brings to every area of life exemplifies how music is the vessel by which she has introduced the world of passion driven learning to students. Teaching through the arts across the curriculum with community collaborations can bring extraordinary successes for students and unlimited possibilities for engaging lessons to help meet the needs of 21st century learners.

**Macaire McDonough-Davies**, Principal of North Belt Elementary School in Humble ISD, leads a Title I school that focuses on the whole child. She and her staff work diligently to ensure that all students are prepared for college and careers through rigorous and

relevant learning. Ms. Davies holds several advanced degrees including the Rice University REEP Business Fellowship for School Leaders where she learned to seek innovative ways to reach students. Prior to joining Humble ISD, Ms. Davies worked for a Wall Street investment bank where she provided guidance to a Nobel Prize laureate and many internationally known analysts and economists. While she didn't begin her career as a teacher, Ms. Davies comes from a family of teachers, so it was inevitable that she too would ultimately find her life's passion in education.

**Patrick Paris** is in his fifteenth year as Fine Arts Coordinator for the Conroe Independent School District. Prior to this assignment, he served as Director of Bands in the Texas City Independent School District. Under his direction, all Texas City Bands earned Superior Ratings at University Interscholastic League competition.

Previously, Mr. Paris served as Associate Director of Bands at Chester W. Nimitz High School in the Aldine Independent School District. Under Mr. Paris' guidance, Nimitz's program doubled in enrollment and consistently earned awards and recognition in festivals and competition, including the University Interscholastic League "Sweepstakes Award."

Mr. Paris holds a Bachelor of Music Education Degree from Texas Tech University where he performed in the University Symphonic Band under the hand of Mr. James Sudduth. He received his Master of Education Administration from Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi. He is the recipient of numerous accolades including being listed in the Who's Who Among Teachers 1998 publication. His professional affiliations include Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Kappa Delta Pi, Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, Texas Choral Directors Association, Texas Orchestra Directors Association, Texas Music Adjudicators Association and the Texas Music Administrators Association.

**Paul Phoenix** has spent 17 years as tenor in the King's Singers, and leaves the group in August 2014. However his musical success began in the 1970s, when he became a Chorister in St. Paul's Cathedral Choir in the City of London, singing in the Queen's Silver Jubilee service in 1977, and recording the Ivor Novello award-winning theme 'Nunc Dimittis' by Geoffrey Burgon, in the BBC adaptation of John Le Carre's *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* in 1979, for which he was later awarded a gold disc.

His musical education continued at the Royal Northern College of Music, in Manchester, England, between 1986 and 1991 where he studied voice and academic studies, spending his spare time singing in various styles and guises - as a member of Manchester Cathedral Choir, fronting a Big Band as well as recording with a Dutch group called 'Janus'. 'In a way, it prepared me for the musical versatility of the King's Singers', says Paul, who stresses that his freelance career was well underway by the time he graduated. There followed a six year period during which he continued to diversify, singing as a soloist in oratorio, taking part in pop and classical sessions, coaching the choristers of Westminster Under School and performing with the Monteverdi Choir.

In 1997, Paul successfully auditioned for the King's Singers, and joined in September of that year. Averaging more than 120 concerts annually, he has sung in many of the world's greatest concert halls, from Sydney Opera House to Carnegie Hall in New York, and travelled as far as Chile and New Zealand, Russia, China and South Africa, with too many places to mention in between! As well as a packed concert schedule, King's Singers recordings continue to be released to critical acclaim, and Paul was co-producer on the 2009 Grammy-winning album, *Simple Gifts*, as well as performing on the 2011 Grammy-winning recording, *Light and Gold*, featuring works by the American composer Eric Whitacre. In 2013, the King's Singers were also voted into the 'Gramophone Hall of Fame'.

2014 marks his 'retirement' from the King's Singers and the launch of a new phase: 'Paul Phoenix: Perform and Engage'.

'It's important to me to pass on the many skills I have learned in 17 years as a King's Singer', explains Paul. 'My singing career will continue as a guest soloist, but I also want to concentrate on educating, mentoring, lecturing and coaching. I feel uniquely placed to offer new perspectives and advice on the career development of young musicians, as well as coaching choirs and ensembles and lecturing on the art of 'audience engagement'.'

**Christopher Rose**, FotoFest partner and curriculum consultant, Scholar, and Outreach Director for the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas, studies early modern Arab world, with focus on the development of the city of Cairo, but also has a passion for connecting the arts of other cultures to the classroom. As Outreach Director, Chris has transformed the Middle East outreach program at Texas into a vibrant organization through collaboration in a consortium called Hemispheres, through which curriculum development and teacher training are coordinated by the five area studies centers at the University. He has written or co-written numerous curriculum units for K-12 educators and travels throughout the state of Texas to conduct workshops and professional development training for educators and frequently presents at state and national conferences. He holds a Master's Degree in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Texas, where he worked on slavery in theory and practice in Islamic law. He completed his BA in International Service at American University in Washington, DC, during which he spent a year abroad studying at the American University in Cairo. He speaks Egyptian Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Castilian Spanish, and reads Classical Arabic, Portuguese, and Swedish.

**Dabrina Sandifer**, Teaching Artist, Main Street Theater, is a teaching artist, director, writer, community advocate, and actress born and raised in Houston, Texas. Her educational background includes the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts

(HSPVA) and the University of Houston. She has worked in arts education and administration at HSPVA, Main Street Theater, the Alley Theatre, Young Audiences of Houston, Dance Houston, and more. She is passionate about the arts and education with hopes of building programming that integrates the two.

**Dr. Linda Scott** is dedicated to being of service to science educators and students. She has been active in the Texas Regional Collaborative for over a decade and continues to serve Texas science educators as the Co-director of the Rice Science Collaborative. Dr. Scott currently serves as the Executive Director of the Rice University School Science and Technology (SST) program. The SST program enriches teacher understanding of content and pedagogy while developing teacher leadership capacity. SST serves teachers of elementary science in the ConocoPhillips Rice Elementary Model Science Lab (REMSL), serves teachers of high school physics, chemistry, and biology through the Rice Excellence in Secondary Science (RESST) program, serves middle school mathematics and science teachers through AMP!: Applied Mathematics Program: A Model Lab for Houston Mathematics and Science Teachers and offers a variety of summer programs for middle school and high school science students and teachers. Dr. Scott directed the early childhood, elementary and intermediate science programs and was a leader in elementary engineering, innovative thinking, and collaborative practices in Aldine ISD, Project Director of the Aldine-Texas Regional Collaborative, and was adjunct educational leadership faculty at Sam Houston State University prior to joining the Rice University SST Team.

**Patricia (Pat) Selin** is the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program and Vanguard coordinator at Wharton PK-8 Dual Language Academy. Wharton is the only 100% dual language (Spanish/English) two-way immersion dual-language school in HISD. Prior to becoming the IB/Vanguard coordinator at Wharton, Pat was a third, fourth & fifth grade dual-language classroom teacher in Houston ISD. Before that she lived in Mexico for 12 years, working as an artist and kindergarten and high school teacher. Previously Pat was co-owner and operator of two live music clubs and a restaurant in Houston.

**Jennifer Clagett Sommers** holds an MFA in Dance, Performance and Choreography from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. She has performed with Laura Dean Musicians and Dancers, Street Signs Center for Literature and Performance, and the Albany Berkshire Ballet, where she also served as Ballet Mistress. Her dance honors include a scholarship to Jacob's Pillow Choreography Workshop, a Durham Arts Council Emerging Artist Grant, and a Lake Region Arts Council grant in support of new work. From 2000-2005, she served as the Associate Director of Raleigh Dance Theatre (a Southeastern Regional Ballet Association Honor Company) and on the faculty of Meredith College. From 2005-2008, she served on the faculty of the University of Minnesota Morris and taught both dance and interdisciplinary courses. She relocated to Houston in 2008 and launched a dance program at KIPP Sharpstown College Prep. She joined the Houston Ballet Education Outreach department in 2010 and is currently Outreach Coordinator and Curriculum Specialist. She also teaches for Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy, and has served on the faculty of and choreographed for the University of Houston.

**Pat Surface** is Co-Director of the Building Cultural Bridges program. A global collaboration through the arts that has taken her school's music curriculum beyond the boundaries of the classrooms through deeply engaging collaborations locally and internationally. Pat and her teaching partner established collaborative partnerships with the education departments from NASA, The Houston Symphony and other Houston arts organizations with an international presence 14 years ago. The "BCB" program has become a highly recognized success for music students and the entire school, bringing in guests from around the world. Several articles have featured the BCB program in the Southwestern Music Magazine and in the Texas Congressional publications.

Guiding students to discover their talents and helping them create a life-long passion for music has been at the forefront of Pat's approach to teaching. She was recognized with an international Brain Gym Award from the Edu-Kinesiology Foundation for integrating whole-brain exercises in her music classroom curriculum and introducing the exercises to her school district.

Pat, a graduate of Southwestern Oklahoma State University with a Bachelors and Masters of Music Education, is a music specialist K-12. For 42 years she has enjoyed teaching music, band, choir and was an elementary classroom teacher in Texas and New Mexico.

**Mary Sutton**, Director of Education at the Alley Theatre, has been in theatre education for 21 years with a specialty of working in diverse communities, as well as public/private schools and colleges. She has performed and taught throughout the United States and Europe since she began her career in NYC. She has originated award-winning programs from the popular elementary tour "Oskar and the Big Bully Battle"; to the exemplary arts integration and core curriculum program, "Concepts at Play" in Silicon Valley; to the "Arts Integration Network" in California—a mentorship arts integration teacher training highlighted by the Partners-in-Education program at the Kennedy Center. She has designed arts curriculum from pre-K through college. Additionally she worked in the Rural Arts initiative in the Southeast for the NEA where she pioneered Applied Theatre Techniques from 1990-1998. Ms. Sutton is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School for the Arts in acting and The American Repertory Theatre's Institute for Advanced Theatre Studies at Harvard in directing.

**Natalie Svacina** works closely with area educators, middle school students and teens in her position as Kinder Foundation Education Center Coordinator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. She holds a master's degree in the history of art from the University of Kansas and a bachelor's degree in the history of art from the University of Texas at Austin. She gained valuable experience in museum education through her positions at the Spencer Museum of Art in Lawrence, Kansas and the Meadows

Museum in Dallas, Texas. She has presented nationally at the National Art Education Association Conference on such topics as “Building a Better Teacher Advisory Board” and “Maximizing the Multi-Disciplinary, Collaborative Potential of the Museum/Schools Program” as well as locally at the Houston Arts Partners Conference on “Teaching and Learning with Art: A Collaboration with the Museum and Middle School Educators.”

**Amber Szymczyk:** As Associate Director for Secondary Science Education of the School Science and Technology program at Rice University, Amber leads the Rice Excellence in Secondary Science Teaching (RESSST) chemistry program. In this capacity, she guides Houston area high school chemistry teachers in weekly meetings on Rice’s campus to explore both chemistry concepts and the ways in which they can be taught using inquiry methods. Prior to her work at Rice, she taught AP Chemistry, Honors Chemistry, and Level Chemistry courses at Austin High School in Fort Bend ISD for seven years. Amber holds a B.S. in Chemistry from Louisiana State University and an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M.

**Megan Weinel** is an active singer, choral director and educator. She joined Da Camera of Houston as the Assistant Director of Education and Community Initiatives in August of 2013. Additionally, Megan directs the children’s choir at First Methodist Downtown and will take on the position of Artistic Director of the Heights Community Children’s Choir this fall. Her experience ranges from teaching music fundamentals to preschool and elementary students to privately coaching advanced high school singers. Prior to joining Da Camera, Megan taught music in the public schools for several years, most recently as a middle school choir director in Cypress Fairbanks ISD. Megan is a member of TMEA and TCDA and serves as a guest choral clinician and adjudicator. In addition to teaching, Megan has had the privilege of performing with the Houston Gilbert & Sullivan Society, Austin Vocal Arts Ensemble, Opera Vista, Texas Master Chorale, the United Nations Association International Choir and the Houston Symphony Chorus. She lives in downtown Houston with her husband John and their two dogs.

**Shannon Wilson** first joined The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion staff in 2003 as the director of marketing and education. She was with The Pavilion during the 2003-04 seasons and rejoined the team in 2013. As the director of marketing and education, Wilson oversees the overall marketing, advertising and public relations efforts of The Pavilion. Additionally, she oversees the production of The Center’s educational outreach programs. Prior to her return to The Pavilion, Wilson spent eight years in California helping her daughter Kirby pursue her acting career. In addition to her daughter she has two sons. The oldest, Brady, is a golf professional in Austin, Texas, and her other son, Tyler, is studying law at St. Mary’s in San Antonio, Texas. Raised in Corpus Christi, Texas, Wilson received her Bachelor of Science in Communication at the University of Texas at Austin. She furthered her education at the University of Houston where she received her MBA. Wilson resides in Conroe, Texas, with her husband Maurie and their two dogs, Lilly the maltipoo and Hank the pug.

**Brian Wolf** is the Chair of the English Department at Bellaire High School. He holds a B.A. in Theology from the University of St. Thomas, and M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Houston.

**Stefanie Yates** has six years’ experience teaching students with cognitive disabilities in the Cy Fair school district. She is highly qualified to teach Special Education and is presently teaching at Goodson Middle School. She specializes in teaching Reading, Language Arts and Social Studies in the LIFE Skills setting. Prior to teaching, Stefanie worked for Catholic Charities of St. Louis, providing training for foster parents and staff as well as providing case management services for at-risk youth in the foster care system. Stefanie received her B.A. degree in Psychology from Mississippi State University in 2000. She received her M.S. degree in Experimental Psychology with a research interest in Cognition from Villanova University in 2003.